UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST
COMMONWEALTH HONORS COLLEGE (CHC) COUNCIL

The charge of the Commonwealth Honors College Council is to provide advice to the Dean on all matters relating to the administration of the Honors College, its curriculum and policy, including;

- honors course approvals;
- standards governing the establishment, modification and termination of all Departmental Honors and Multidisciplinary Honors programs;
- standards governing CHC student admission and graduation; and
- standards governing and the direction of Honors theses/projects and independent studies.

Minutes

Date **March 6, 2023 12:20–2:00 PM**

Location **via Zoom** https://umass-amherst.zoom.us/j/92248238718?pwd=T2tRQkphYS9jS1Q3QmVrUUxuRXpKUT09
Meeting ID: 922 4823 8718 **Passcode:** 627260

Attendance Anthony Paik, Camille Cammack, Dominick Usher, Elena Carbone, Farshid Hajir, Junyang Lu, Kim Dion, Lisa Troy, Mari Castañeda, Melanie Radik, Muzzo Uysal, Patrick Sullivan, Stacy Giufre, Susan Ware, Theresa Dooley, Tom Brashear-Alejandro, Casey Krone (minutes)

Introductions

Approve Minutes Minutes of 2/13/2023 are unanimously approved.

Announcements

Updates from the Dean (*Mari Castañeda)*

1. Dean Castañeda has met with the new Chancellor, Javier Reyes, and is trying to get him on the schedule for a CHC All Staff Meeting.
2. Honors Thesis Workshop cancelled by Snow Day last week has been rescheduled for next week.
3. Rebecca Hewitt is giving the CHC Daffodil Lecture taking place this Thursday, March 9, 2023. The Ecological Lens: Harnessing Systems Knowledge to Steward Our Planet https://www.umass.edu/honors/honors-events/daffodil-lecture
4. MassURC is again virtual this year for two reasons. First, due to the Public Health Promotion Center currently occupying the first floor of the Campus Center, the space we need for an in-person conference is unavailable. Second, we received feedback from other Commonwealth schools that travel to Amherst is a burden for their students and they prefer the virtual format. In the future we hope to utilize a hybrid format. Presenting at MassURC fulfills public presentation requirement for thesis or capstone. All CHC staff will be in the office and assisting at the conference on 4/28/2023.
5. Dean Castañeda has been working with several college Deans on the best way to fill several currently vacant CHC Joint Faculty positions.
6. CHC is continuing with messaging and practice around a culture of care within the College which first started during the early part of the pandemic. A CHC student was encouraging another college to practice a culture of care there. How do we do it in a way that is equitable and inclusive?

Updates from CHC Council Chair *(Lisa Troy)*

1. Gratitude to the council for your input and ongoing work. Your dedication makes this a solid place to move issues forward within the honors college.

New Business

1. No honors course approvals this round but there is one in the process for our next meeting.

2. MA Department of Higher Education's Equity Agenda (*Mari Castañeda*)
    a. https://www.mass.edu/strategic/equity.asp
    b. This is an effort at the statewide level to think about how we implement the strategic plan/actions that were put forward from the working group from last year.
    c. Dean Castañeda will be attending the Commonwealth Honors Program Council's spring meeting in May with DHE Commissioner Noe Ortega.
    d. At CHC the Curriculum & Policy Committee will be starting with the Policy Audit part of the Action Plan. We will examine our academic and advising policies to see how they contribute to inequity, etc.; we will not be looking at HR policies. First step is to collect our institutional knowledge about our policies so we have them written down and can examine them closely through an equity lens. This process may involve checking in with Registrar, Faculty Senate, other colleges, IPO.
    e. The Council discussed protecting academic freedom, the focus on evidence-based equity practices, the 3.4 minimum cumulative gpa statewide honors requirement, the CHC Good Standing Policy, and students who remain in CHC for housing with no intention to complete the CHC curriculum.
    f. CHC's equity review process will include feedback from students, particularly the Student Advisor Board and student representatives to the Council. The Council will return to this issue later this semester or next fall.
    g. Sludge: What Stops Us from Getting Things Done and What to Do about It by Cass R. Sunstein. Provost has been recommending this book and it was discussed by the Council in relation to our policies and practices that get in the way of doing things well.

Old Business

1. Mt Ida campus trip rescheduled *(Mari Castañeda)*
    a. Friday April 7, 2023. Group from CPC will go to Mt. Ida to learn about the resources there. Depart at 8am, return around 5pm. Council members not on CPC can fill remaining spaces available in the shuttle.
2. Academic Honesty update *(Lisa Troy)*
    a. The Council discussed its past discussions on Academic Honesty and making informal recommendations to the Faculty Senate, Director of Student Success, and others on campus.
        i. In particular, there was discussion of the University's position on ChatGPT and other AI text generators. The University's policy is that unless explicitly allowed by a faculty instructor, use of AI text generators is a violation of the University's Academic Honesty policy. However, the possibility of legitimate uses of AI text generators between students and faculty exists so the University will continue to discuss this issue as it evolves.
3. CHC colloquia update *(Lisa Troy)*
    a. Lisa Troy and Elena Carbone will put together honors colloquia documentation to assist departments and faculty – how to do them, how to schedule, past examples. Colloquiums are useful for faculty doing HI's with a non-honors course that sponsor multiple students over multiple semesters.

Any Other Business

Committee Reports

Reports from CHC Council Representatives on other Councils

1. Academic Standards Committee Review (*Elena Carbone*)
    a. Elena shares numbers for ISH and 499's for Spring 2023. Late proposals are still trickling in. Some students have required multiple contacts to move proposals forward. Submission numbers are still down from Spring 2022.
2. Academic Matters Council (*Dominick Usher*)
    a. Some changes to Education minor, undergrad Managerial Economics and Resource Economics, accelerated masters in Nutrition and change to introductory core sequencing for CICS for more programming preparation courses. All revisions submitted were approved. Subcommittee on policy of AMC has been reviewing the Academic Honest policy. Linda Lowry is the chair of that committee, and a survey has been sent to randomly selected faculty.
3. Research Council (*Thomas Brashear-Alejandro*)
    a. Research Council heard from Provost Serio about ongoing initiatives and the NSF work environment. CHC Associate Dean Ann Marie Russell gave an overview of the MassURC. MassURC will be on the agenda for Fall 2023 so there is earlier notice for Council members. Task force on centers and institutes will discuss undergrad research centers or institutes among peer universities and aspirational universities.

Next Meeting

April 10, 2023, 12:20-2:00 pm

AY 2022-2023 Meeting Schedule – 12:20-2:00pm

SPRING: February 13, March 6, April 10, May 8